

**From:** P Howells  
**To:** Microsoft ATR  
**Date:** 1/24/02 3:59am  
**Subject:** Microsoft Settlement

I have just received Micro\$ofts' latest Freedom to Innovate newsletter, in which they complain about AOL's new lawsuit against them. Since I dispise AOL even more than I dislike Micro\$oft, I am inclined to agree with Micro\$oft: "This latest legal move appears to be an attempt by AOL to once again retreat from the rigors of competition to the safer confines of the courtroom, where the company is clearly more comfortable."

Having said that, I also must say that the "settlement" to which you are agreeing in the antitrust case against Micro\$oft is a case in which the DoJ has dropped it pants, bent over, spread its cheeks, and said "insert whatever you want as deeply as you want." It appears that the "whatever" was a barbed-wire dildo. Unfortunately it is really the taxpayers and consumers that are getting the shaft, not the DoJ. I apologize if the graphic imagery of my metaphor is disturbing, but it is the gentlest one that comes to mind.

I have neither the time nor the inclination to detail my objections to the "settlement." Suffice it to say that since the antitrust suit was filed, M\$ has released \*two\* new versions of Windows in which they have blatently incorporated an application that mascerades as an operating system feature, Internet Explorer. As I recall, the purpose of the suit was to get it out of Windows...hello? is anyone home? It's still there! A browser has no more business as an integral part of an operating system than a word processor does, or porn web site, or Donkey Kong. Furthermore, your lawsuit and "settlement" put the fear of God into them so badly that they felt quite comfortable incorporating Messenger Service and Netmeeting, two more applications, into Windows XP. The competitive pressures that you've brought to bear are so intense that Windows XP is actually more expensive than previous versions of Windows.

They are going to donate a billion dollars worth of software? Bah, I'm not impressed. A chump change tax write off. A billion dollars worth of Windows XP will cost them between 5 and 10 million dollars, if that much, and give them a \$1 billion tax deduction. Not to mention 5 million Windows users to add to their monopoly. Lovely.

Good work guys. Micr\$oft thanks you.

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PS: I am not a Macintosh or Linux user that is railing about Micro\$oft. My exclusive operating system is Windows XP. Not because Windows is superior, but because the monopoly forces me to conform. My work is with computers and without Windows I lose 90+% of my potential customer base.